



Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

November 8, 2018

The Honorable Travis Kavulla
Commissioner, Montana Public Service Commission
Chair, North American Numbering Council (NANC)
1701 Prospect Avenue
P.O. Box 202601
Helena, MT 59620-2601

Re: N11 Code/National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act of 2018
WC Docket No. 18-336; CC Docket No. 92-105

Dear Chairman Kavulla:

As you know, the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act of 2018 (Act)¹ was signed into law on August 14, 2018. The Act directs the Commission to (1) conduct a study that examines the feasibility of designating a simple, easy-to-remember, three-digit dialing code to be used for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system; and (2) analyze how well the current National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is working to address the needs of veterans.² The Act also directs the Commission to coordinate with the Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA), as well as the North American Numbering Council (NANC).³

Under the Act, SAMHSA and the VA must conduct studies and provide reports to the Commission by February 11, 2019.⁴ The Commission must then review that information, together with information from its own study and consultation with the NANC, to produce a report by August 14, 2019.⁵ The Commission's report must recommend whether a particular N11 dialing code or dialing code covered by the Act should be used for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system and, if so, the logistics and costs associated with designating such a dialing code, among other issues.

To carry out the Commission's obligations under the Act, we direct the NANC, through its Numbering Administration Oversight Working Group, to:

- consider the feasibility of using each of the currently-designated three-digit dialing codes to be used for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system, including codes the Commission has established for other purposes;⁶
- consider the feasibility of using a new easy-to-remember, three-digit dialing code for such a system, including, for example, digits preceded by a star or number sign;

¹ National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act of 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-233, H.R. 2345, 115th Congress (2018), <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr2345/text>.

² *Id.* § 3(a)(1).

³ *Id.* § 3(a)(2).

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.* § 3(b)(1).


⁶ *Id.* § 3(a)(2).

- outline the logistics of using a currently-designated or newly-designated three-digit dialing code, including but not limited to the need for translation changes in the network and cell site analysis and reprogramming by wireless carriers;⁷
- estimate the costs associated with using a currently-designated or newly-designated dialing code, including costs incurred by service providers to carry out the above logistics, and any costs the federal government, states, and localities may incur to implement the dialing code;⁸
- recommend whether the Commission should designate a three-digit dialing code for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline system and, if so, what three-digit code it should designate;⁹
- provide a proposed cost-benefit analysis comparing use of a three-digit dialing code with the current use of a toll-free number to operate the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline;¹⁰ and
- provide any additional recommendations on the topic to assist the Commission with its report.¹¹

We further direct the NANC to approve a written report on its findings on these issues, and to transmit that report to the Wireline Competition Bureau by February 11, 2019. If you have questions about this referral, please contact Marilyn Jones, the NANC's Designated Federal Officer, by telephone at (202) 418-2357, or by email at marilyn.jones@fcc.gov.

In the meantime, thank you for the NANC's assistance in helping the Commission fulfill its responsibilities under the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act. Your work on this important Act will be a major contribution to suicide prevention and mental health crisis management in the United States.

Sincerely,



Kris Anne Monteith

Chief

Wireline Competition Bureau, FCC

⁷ *Id.* § 3(b)(2)(A).

⁸ *Id.* § 3(b)(2)(B).

⁹ *Id.* § 3(b)(2)(C).

¹⁰ *Id.* § 3(b)(2)(D).

¹¹ *Id.* § 3(b)(2)(E).